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ABSTRACT

This lesson is based on the National Register of Historic Places registration file "Women's Rights Historic Site Thematic Resources" and other sources on the M'Clintock House and women's rights. The lesson is about a house located at 14 East Williams Street in Waterloo, New York, where on July 16, 1848, five women, including Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, met to draft a document that outlined their views on and complaints about the role of women in society. This lesson may be used in teaching units on 19th-century social reform or women's history. The lesson is divided into the following sections: (1) "Setting the Stage: Historical Context"; (2) "Locating the Site: Maps" (Western New York State and Surrounding Region, Waterloo and Seneca Falls); (3) "Determining the Facts: Readings" (The M'Clintock Family, American Women in the Mid-19th Century, Declaration of Sentiments; The Life of Elizabeth M'Clintock); (4) "Visual Evidences: Images" (Bird's-Eye View of Waterloo, M'Clintock House and Household, The M'Clintock House Today; Cartoons Depicting Views of Women's Public Roles); and "Putting It All Together: Activities (Social Reform and Women's Rights in Your Area). (BT)

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Teaching with Historic Places

The M'Clintock House: A Home to the Women's Rights Movement

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March 17, 1999

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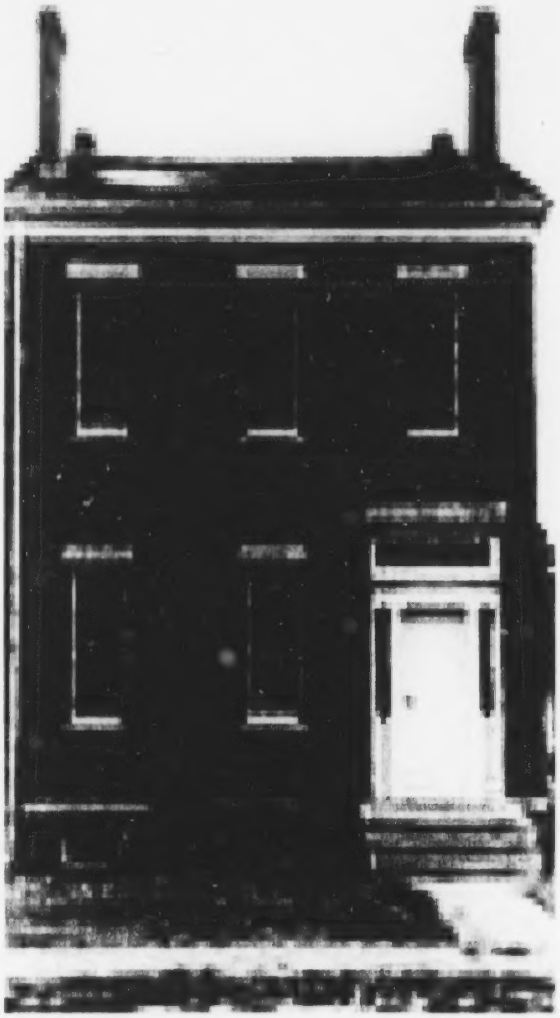
The M'Clintock House:
A Home to the Women's Rights Movement



It was not its appearance that made the house at
14 East Williams Street in Waterloo, New York
exceptional. In mid-19th century America, after all, there were thousands of two-story brick homes with a white front door and chimneys at either end.

Instead, the M'Clintock House came to occupy a prominent place in American history because of the people who lived inside its walls and in the surrounding community.

On July 16, 1848, five women, including Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, met here to draft what they called the "Declaration of Sentiments." This document outlined their views on and complaints about the role of women
in society. Two days later, in nearby Seneca Falls, it served as the centerpiece of discussion when these women carried out their ambitious plan to convene America's First Women's Rights Convention.

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About This Lesson

This lesson is based on the National Register of Historic Places registration file "Women's Rights Historic Site Thematic Resources" and other sources on the M'Clintock House and women's rights.

Where it fits into the curriculum

Topics: This lesson could be used in teaching units on 19th century social reform or women's history.

Time period: 1830-1850s

Objectives for students

1) To describe conditions in upstate New York in the first half of the 19th century that led to the nickname "the Burned-Over District."

2) To examine the issues that led to the First Women's Rights Convention in 1848.

3) To investigate the tactics used by reformers in the early years of the women's rights movement.

4) To discover how issues concerning women's rights played out in their own community.

Materials for students

The materials listed below either can be used directly on the computer or can be printed out, photocopied, and distributed to students. The maps, photos, floor plan, and cartoons appear twice: in a low-resolution version with associated questions and alone in a larger, high-resolution version.

1) two maps of New York state and the towns of Waterloo and Seneca Falls;

2) a drawing of Waterloo in 1873;

3) three readings on the M'Clintock family and the role of women in the mid-19th century;

4) a copy of the Declaration of Sentiments;

5) floor plans of the M'Clintock House.

6) 1850 Census data for the M'Clintock household;

7) a photo of the M'Clintock House today;

8) a cartoon depicting women's roles.

Visiting the site

The M'Clintock House is located in the historic area of Waterloo, NewYork and is part of Women's Rights National Historical Park. The Visitors' Center is located in the nearby city of Seneca Falls, which also contains several other sites important to the women's rights movement. From the New York State Thruway (I-90), take Exit 41 and go south on N.Y. Route 414, which becomes Fall Street. Follow the signs to the visitors' center. Maps are available to help you locate other sites within the park, including the remains of the Wesleyan Chapel, the Elizabeth Cady Stanton House, and the National Women's Hall of Fame. For more information, visit the park web pages at http://www.nps.gov/wori/

Teaching Activities

Setting the Stage

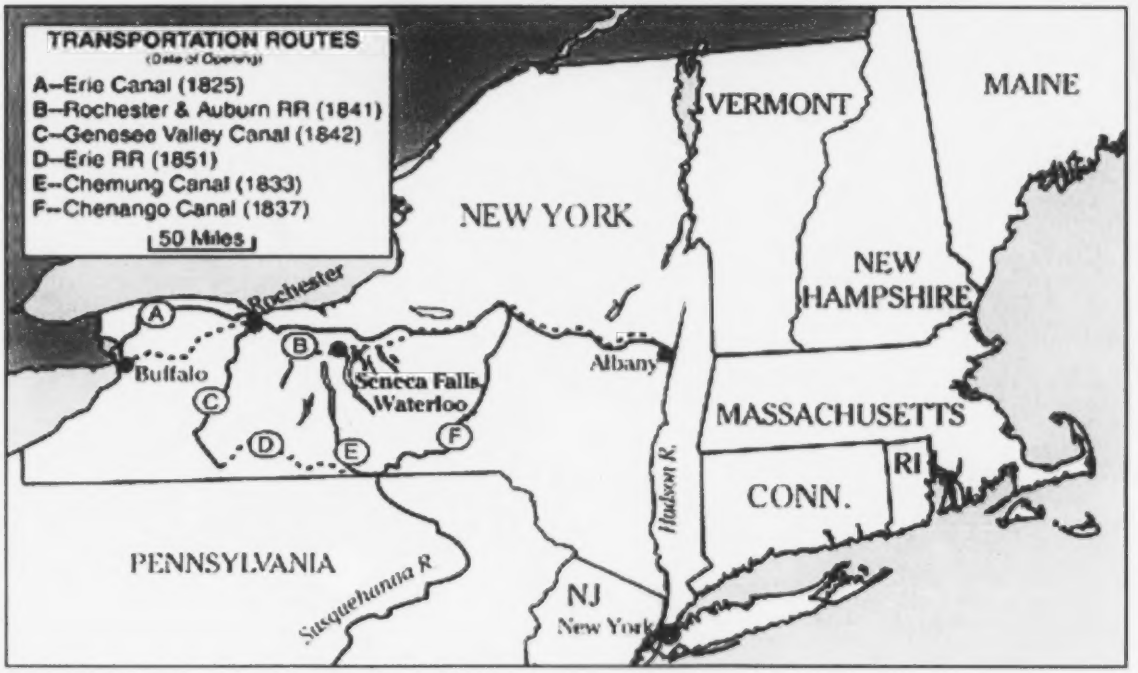
Explain to students that in the 1790s, the series of Protestant revivals known as the Second Great Awakening began in Connecticut. Though these revivals varied according to time and place as they appeared over the next 50 years, most featured preachers who encouraged individuals to experience an intensely emotional conversion that would lead to living in a more moral way. They also claimed that men and women could learn not to sin, a position that suggested people could control their own salvation. This belief, which contradicted the earlier teachings that an individual's fate was predestined, also spread in the early 19th century.

Revivals had one of their biggest influences in upstate New York. Rapid changes there in politics and economics had left many men and women struggling to find their place in a new world. The revivals, which offered spiritual guidance and emphasized the importance of the individual, therefore appealed to many people. Revivals fired through upstate New York so often and so strongly that the area became known as the "Burned-Over District."

The Second Great Awakening had a further effect on the region. Many people there, as in other parts of the country, took its lessons about self-determination and applied them to their lives outside of church. The Burned-Over District became a hot-bed of activity for many of the reform movements appearing in antebellum America: abolition of slavery, developing public education, and reducing the consumption of alcohol. In 1848, citizens of Waterloo and Seneca Falls, two towns in the Burned-Over District, came to play a critical role in the early struggle for women's rights by organizing the First Women's Rights Convention.

Teaching Activities--Locating the Site

Map 1: Western New York State and Surrounding Region.



Settlers began to flood into western New York after the Revolutionary War, first from New England, then from Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Most came in search of better economic opportunities, hoping in particular to find land fertile enough to support a successful farm. Early settlers usually came in wagons, which required traveling on roads that were rough, frequently muddy, and almost always slow.

Towns quickly developed along most transportation routes. In many respects Waterloo and Seneca Falls, two towns located between the Finger Lakes and the Erie Canal, were typical of the communities that developed in upstate New York in the first half of the 19th century. There travelers found services, farmers bought and sold goods, and people from throughout the area participated in social and governmental activities.

1. What alternative methods of transportation could people from New England have used to reach western New York in 1830? In 1850?

2. How would people coming from Pennsylvania have traveled in 1825? In1855?

3. Do you think people in New York welcomed the presence of new methods of transportation? Why or why not?

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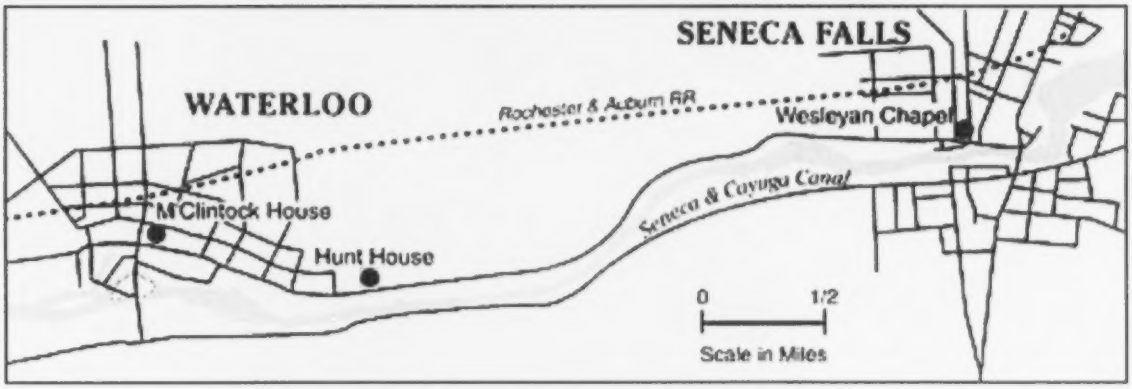
Teaching Activities--Locating the Site

Map 2: Waterloo and Seneca Falls, New York.



(National Park Service.)

Waterloo had been founded at the end of the 18th century, when New York state negotiated treaties that extinguished the land claims of the Cayuga and Seneca nations. The nearby Seneca River attracted settlers who saw that it could power mills. The town also benefitted from its position along an east-west turnpike and along a canal that linked two local lakes. In 1828, improvements to the Cayuga and Seneca Canal connected Waterloo to the Erie Canal; in 1841, the Rochester and Auburn Railroad began to serve Waterloo. By 1840 Waterloo had become a community of nearly 3,600 people, while Seneca Falls, less than four miles away, added another 4,000 residents to the area. Both featured a growing number of homes, shops, and churches, while farms filled the surrounding countryside.

1. What methods of transportation served Seneca Falls and Waterloo?

2. The businessmen of Seneca Falls helped pay to bring the railroad to theirtown. Why would they do that?

3. Do you think the people in the two towns would have interacted much? Why or why not?

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Teaching Activities--Determining the Facts

Reading 1: The M'Clintock Family

Waterloo, New York powerfully illustrated the political, economic, and social changes taking place throughout the United States during the first half of the 19th century. Politics were becoming increasingly democratic for white men, most notably through the removal of requirements that a man own property in order to vote. Over time voters listened less to the wealthy and powerful, learning instead to make choices for themselves. Successful candidates for public office learned to appeal to a variety of voters, frequently emphasizing the wisdom and importance of the "common man" who made up a large section of the electorate.

The economy was developing in new ways. Across the country, innovations in transportation dramatically reduced the cost of shipping, lowering the price of goods and creating new trading opportunities. Better transportation was especially important because of the spread of the market economy. By the middle of the 19th century it had become much more common for a family to buy many of the products it needed, even if they had to come in some cases from hundreds of miles away. The growth of a national "market" encouraged people to specialize in the production of a small number of goods, selling them in order to receive money to pay for other needs. The Industrial Revolution contributed to this pattern, as factories began turning out large numbers of similar items. New plants in Waterloo, for example, began manufacturing woolen goods, a change that created new types of jobs.

Moving into this complicated, changing community--and into the house at 14 East Williams Street--was the M'Clintock family. Thomas and Mary Ann M'Clintock and their children came to Waterloo from Philadelphia in the mid-1830s. They rented a home on East Williams Street from Richard Hunt, who was married to Thomas's sister Sarah until she died in 1842. Its location was a convenient one for the M'Clintocks: the back door led to the drugstore Thomas operated with daughter Elizabeth and later, when he was older, son Charles.

Religion played a crucial role in the lives of the M'Clintocks. They were active members of the Society of Friends or, as they are commonly known, the Quakers. Since its founding in 17th century England, the Society has taught that everyone has an "Inner Light" that allows direct access to God. Following that Light leads to spiritual development. The Quaker belief that the Inner Light exists in all people has led them to think that no individual is better or worse than another. This emphasis on equality has helped make them one of the most socially active religious groups in the United States; they were, for example, some of the strongest opponents of slavery. The M'Clintocks were members of a branch of the Quakers known as the Hicksites, who had left the main "meeting" in the 1820s. This split centered on the most important source for guidance: the traditional or Orthodox branch relied more heavily on the Bible, while the Hicksites, influenced by revivalism, placed more emphasis on individual conscience. Many Hicksites were energetic reformers, a tendency the M'Clintocks illustrated. They held temperance meetings in the room above the drug store and campaigned for better treatment of American Indians. They were strong opponents of slavery: Mary Ann and

Thomas petitioned Congress to outlaw the practice, and Elizabeth helped organize fund-raising "fairs" that supported anti-slavery societies.

In the summer of 1848, however, the M'Clintocks were among 200 people in and around Waterloo who decided to leave the Hicksite meeting. They believed the Hicksites were still not active enough on social issues - many meetings refused anti-slavery speakers the use of their buildings, for example - or committed enough to sexual equality. They also wanted local meetings to have more autonomy. They therefore formed the Congregational Friends of Human Progress, a church open "to Christian, Jew, Mohammedan and Pagan" as long as that person was committed to improving society. In the guidelines for their new church, Thomas M'Clintock wrote that in the Progressive Friends, "not only will the equality of women be recognized, but so perfectly, that in our meetings, larger and smaller, men and women will meet together and transact business together." Even the Hicksites, who were far more liberal than most Quakers (who were in turn more liberal than most other churches), had separate services for the two sexes. It was this dedication to women's rights that helped bring the M'Clintock House into history.

1. What changes were taking place in western New York in the first half of the 19th century?

2. Do you think the Burned-Over District would have been a good place to find supporters of abolition and women's rights? Why or why not?

3. How did the M'Clintocks' religious beliefs shape their commitment to social reform?

Reading 1 was compiled from Andrea Constantine Hawkes, "'Feeling a Strong Desire to Tread a Broader Road to Fortune:' The Antebellum Evolution of Elizabeth Wilson M'Clintock's Entrepreneurial Consciousness," (Master's thesis, University of Maine, 1995); Sandra S. Weber, Special History Study: Women's Rights National Historical Park, Seneca Falls, New York (Washington: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1985); and Barbara A. Yocum, M'Clintock House Historic Structure Report (Lowell, Mass: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1993).

Teaching Activities--Determining the Facts

Reading 2: American Women in the Mid-19th Century

Law, religion, and tradition combined to limit severely the rights of and opportunities for American women before the Civil War. Nowhere in the country could they vote; in many states, once married they could not sign contracts, own property (even if they had inherited it), or control their own earnings. The husband received custody of children after a divorce, no matter what his actions during marriage had been. Though women could hold certain jobs, most notably domestic work, the professions were generally closed to them. The percentage of girls who attended school trailed far behind the figure for boys, and the first women's college, Mount Holyoke, opened only in 1837.

Most Americans of both sexes accepted, even supported, these conditions. They cited Biblical passages that a wife should be subject to her husband. They argued that women were more submissive, gentle, pious, and nurturing than men, leaving them poorly suited for the rough worlds of politics and business. Those same characteristics, however, made them perfect for the "domestic sphere" - raising children, keeping the home, and serving their husbands' needs. Women also were considered more moral, a view supported by the fact that they were more likely to convert during religious revivals. Attempts to upset this "natural" order, advocates of this view claimed, would damage both the people who tried it and society in general.

This ideal of the perfect home was often far from reality, however. Financial necessity forced many women to work outside the home at the same time they were expected to handle most of the household responsibilities. Middle-class women who stayed home often found their lives frustrating and exhausting. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who lived in the neighboring town of Seneca Falls and whose family had enough money to hire servants, wrote:

> To keep house and grounds in good order, purchase every article for daily use, keep the wardrobes of half a dozen human beings in proper trim, take the children to dentists, shoemakers, and different schools, or find teachers at home, altogether made sufficient work to keep one's brain busy, as well as all the hands I could press into service.... My duties were too numerous and varied, and none sufficiently exhilarating or intellectual to bring into play my higher facilities. I suffered with mental hunger, which, like an empty stomach, is very depressing.1

As the 19th century continued, an increasing number of women challenged traditional views about their roles. Some used the spread of voting rights and the Second Great Awakening's emphasis on the individual as bases for arguing that traditional differences among people were not important. Others reacted against the limits they encountered when they participated in causes such as temperance and abolition. Women reformers who spoke to "promiscuous

audiences" - that is, ones that included both sexes - received much criticism; the organizers of a World Anti-Slavery Convention in London in 1840 refused to seat female delegates, even though some of America's most active abolitionists were women. That decision so infuriated Stanton and Lucretia Mott, both of whom had crossed the Atlantic to attend, that they returned to the United States determined to hold a convention to promote equal rights.

Stanton and Mott followed up on their vow at the end of the 1840s. On July13, 1848, Stanton attended a tea party at the home of Richard Hunt, who besides owning the M'Clintocks' house was another dedicated abolitionist. There she again met Mott, who had attended the Hicksite meeting at which the Congregational Friends were formed. Also at the party were Martha Wright; Mott's sister; Jane Hunt, Richard's wife; and Mary Ann M'Clintock. All were Quakers except Wright, who had been expelled from her meeting for marrying a non-Quaker, and Stanton, who attended an Episcopal Church in Seneca Falls.

During the party the women began to discuss their frustrations over the limits society placed on their lives. They decided to organize, as they announced in the newspaper the next day, "a Convention to discuss the social, civil, and religious condition and rights of Women" in Seneca Falls on July and 19 - just six days away. Over the next week they planned the meeting; the "chief movers and managers," according to Mott, were Stanton and the M'Clintocks.

The M'Clintock House was the scene of a crucial part of their work. In July16, the five women created the "Declaration of Sentiments," which outlined their views on the role of women in society. "What a time we had writing it!" remembered Stanton in 1866. "We looked over the declarations of societies we could find, but none touched our case, until at last, someone suggested our Fathers of 1776."2 Two days later, more than 300 people came to Seneca Falls for the First Women's Rights Convention. They met in the Wesleyan Methodist Church, whose founding underlined the emphasis certain residents of the Burned-Over District placed on reform: most of the members had left another Protestant church because they wanted stronger stands against slavery. Despite short notice and limited publicity, people traveled as much as 40 miles to attend the convention. Though most were women, at least 40 men joined the audience as well, including leading abolitionists such as Frederick Douglass. The M'Clintocks participated actively: Thomas served as the convention president during part of the session, one of their daughters was secretary, and Elizabeth gave a presentation and joined the committee that edited and arranged for the printing of the minutes of the meeting.

For two days the conventioneers discussed the rights of and restrictions on women. Much of the time went to consideration of the Declaration of Sentiments, which was ultimately signed by 68 women and 32 men. At least half of those from Waterloo who added their names were progressive Friends, including the M'Clintocks and the Hunts; other prominent signers included Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. The participants also debated a dozen resolutions that called for equal opportunity for women. This discussion showed just how deeply rooted attitudes about women were: even among these delegates, the resolution calling for women to gain the right to vote barely passed.

1. In what aspects of life were American women in the mid-19th century restricted?

How did people justify these limits?

2. Do you think it mattered that the five women who organized the First Women's Rights Convention already knew each other? Why or why not?

3. How do you think the organizers acquired the skills they needed to make the conference a success?

4. Why do you think many of the people who were interested in women's rights were also committed to the abolition of slavery?

Reading 2 was compiled from Andrea Constantine Hawkes "'Feeling a Strong Desire to Tread a Broader Road to Fortune:' The Antebellum Evolution of Elizabeth Wilson M'Clintock's Entrepreneurial Consciousness,"(Master's thesis, University of Maine, 1995); Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Eighty Years & More: Reminiscences, 1815-1897 (New York: T. Fisher Unwin, 1898; reprint, Schocken Books, 1971); and Sandra S. Weber, Special History Study: Women's Rights National Historical Park, Seneca Falls, New York (Washington: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1985).

1 Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Eighty Years & More: Reminiscences, 1815-1897 (New York: T. Fisher Unwin, 1898; reprint, Schocken Books, 1971).

2 Stanton, Revolution 17 September 1868, 162.

Teaching Activities--Determining the Facts

Document 1: The Declaration of Sentiments

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different from that which they have hitherto occupied, but one to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that impel them to such a course.

We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves, by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their duty to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of the women under this government, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to demand the equal station to which they are entitled.

The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

> **He** has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.
>
> **He** has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice.
>
> **He** has withheld from her rights which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men - both natives and foreigners.
>
> **Having** deprived her of this first right of a citizen, the elective franchise, thereby leaving her without representation in the halls of legislation, he has oppressed her on all sides.

He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.

He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.

He has made her, morally, an irresponsible being, as she can commit many crimes, with impunity, provided they be done in the presence of her husband. In the covenant of marriage, she is compelled to promise obedience to her husband, he becoming, to all intents and purposes, her master - the law giving him power to deprive her of her liberty, and to administer chastisement.

He has so framed the laws of divorce, as to what shall be the proper causes of divorce; in case of separation, to whom the guardianship of the children shall be given, as to be wholly regardless of the happiness of women - the law, in all cases, going upon the false supposition of the supremacy of man, and giving all power into his hands.

After depriving her of all rights as a married woman, if single and the owner of property, he has taxed her to support a government which recognizes her only when her property can be made profitable to it.

He has monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives but a scanty remuneration.

He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and distinction, which he considers most honorable to himself.

As a teacher of theology, medicine, or law, she is not known.

He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education - all colleges being closed against her.

He allows her in Church as well as State, but a subordinate position, claiming Apostolic authority for her exclusion from the ministry, and with some exceptions, from any public participation in the affairs of the Church.

He has created a false public sentiment, by giving to the world a different code of morals for men and women, by which moral delinquencies which exclude women from society, are not only

tolerated but deemed of little account in man.

He has usurped the prerogative of Jehovah himself, claiming it as his right to assign for her a sphere of action, when that belongs to her conscience and her God.

He has endeavored, in every way that he could to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

Now, in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people of this country, their social and religious degradation, - in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of these United States.

In entering upon the great work before us, we anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation, and ridicule; but we shall use every instrumentality within our power to effect our object. We shall employ agents, circulate tracts, petition the State and national Legislatures, and endeavor to enlist the pulpit and the press in our behalf. We hope this Convention will be followed by a series of Conventions, embracing every part of the country.

Firmly relying upon the final triumph of the Right and the True, we do this day affix our signatures to this declaration.

1. On what document was the Declaration of Sentiments based? Why do you think the writers chose that as their basis?

2. What are some of the abuses listed in the Declaration? What rights does this list suggest the women at the convention would like to have had?

3. Only one-third of the 300 people at the convention signed the Declaration of Sentiments. Why do you think the other 200 refused? Would you have signed it? Why or why not?

4. What do you think about the next-to-last paragraph? Does this plan seem to you to be a good one for obtaining change? Why or why not?

Teaching Activities--Determining the Facts

Reading 3: The Life of Elizabeth M'Clintock

The life of Elizabeth M'Clintock (1821-1896) in the years following the Seneca Falls Convention illustrated both the challenges and opportunities for American women in the second half of the 19th century. Immediately after the meeting clergymen and newspapers attacked its organizers and supporters. Elizabeth Cady Stanton wrote some years later, "All the journals from Maine to Texas seemed to strive with each other to see which could make our movement appear the most ridiculous."1

These attacks had only a limited effect, however. Though some of the women who had signed the Declaration decided to withdraw their names, most continued to support the document and the ideas it promoted. The newspaper stories often had the opposite effect their authors intended, because these reports became a way that people learned about the arguments over women's rights. Soon other conventions took place around the country, and similar meetings continued through the rest of the century.

M'Clintock and Stanton worked hard to ensure that the public did not hear only from their opponents. Together they tried to repudiate every argument that was presented against women's rights by writing articles for newspapers from Seneca Falls to New York City, responding to critical ministers, and appealing to the state legislature. They encouraged other women to organize themselves and helped set up women's rights meetings in the Burned-Over District towns of Auburn, Waterloo, Farmington, Rochester, as well as a second one in Seneca Falls.

In the fall of 1849 the two women tried to improve opportunities for women in a more personal way. Earlier in the 1840s, Lucretia Mott's son-in-law Edward M. Davis had offered M'Clintock an apprenticeship in his silk trading firm in Philadelphia. Though Mott remembered the suggestion as a casual one, M'Clintock thought he genuinely wanted to give her the opportunity to follow the "spirit of enterprize" she felt. Stanton now wrote to Mott to ask if she could have her son-in-law give M'Clintock and one of her friends clerkships in his business, or at least find openings at another company.

When his answer came a month later, it was far from what M'Clintock had expected. Davis was not willing to offer her a job, but said his decision had nothing to do with her sex. He explained that because an apprenticeship involved years of menial work at low pay, he would not hire anyone already 28 years old, as M'Clintock was. In addition, Davis's lead salesman Rush Plumly wrote, she had no experience in this kind of work nor did she bring with her any capital to invest in the business.

M'Clintock recognized that the problems Davis and Plumly pointed out had little to do with her personally. They were instead illustrations of the barriers women faced when trying to enter business. She was considered too old and lacked the appropriate experience precisely because women had been excluded from most types of work; she lacked capital for the same reason

and because of the laws which limited the property women could keep in their own names.

Not everyone in Davis's firm was so business-like in their reaction to M'Clintock's request. He had passed around her letter to his employees, all of whom were men. Their responses were collected and sent back to her via Lucretia Mott.2 One clerk argued that public prejudices would hurt the company's business: "It would be 'hostile' to the interests of the house in the present state of public sentiment. While all in the company might regret the existence of the senseless objections to woman so participating in commerce and politics, they are not strong enough financially to stem it. The results of such absurd prejudice would hurt the company's business and it would diminish trade." The firm had reason to worry: supporters of slavery, for example, at times threatened to close down merchants who campaigned for abolition.

Other workers at the company based their objections on the "nature" of women. One of the bookkeepers argued that "The sphere of women has its circumference in domestic and social duties. Women are not naturally strong enough in Mind, to conduct such a concern." Even though Martha Wright had helped organize the Seneca Falls Convention, her 17-year old son believed that "Women are not adapted to the duties of our business." Several of the men even included cartoons making fun of women like M'Clintock.

M'Clintock and Stanton were dismayed when they received the letters and the cartoons. M'Clintock found the comments particularly painful since many of the men shared her religion, which supposedly supported equal rights, and her interest in social reform. She responded by drawing her own cartoons (see Visual Evidence) and by writing a play in which she used a fictionalized version of her experience to reveal her support for a society which gave women equal opportunity and status.

In 1852, M'Clintock married Burroughs Phillips, a lawyer whose brother was minister of the Methodist church in which the convention had been held. Phillips actively supported the women's rights movement, joining his wife as an organizer of a women's rights convention in Syracuse. In April 1854, however, Phillips fell from his carriage and received a blow to the head that doctors could not treat. After less than two years of marriage, Elizabeth M'Clintock became a widow.

A series of changes took place in her life over the next decade. In 1856 her family decided to move back to Pennsylvania in the hope of finding opportunities for their children so the family could continue to live near one another. The M'Clintocks also continued their commitment to abolition, an increasingly contentious issue through the 1850s.

It was during the Civil War that Elizabeth M'Clintock finally had the opportunity to pursue her interest in business. In 1861 she opened her own store in downtown Philadelphia; her father apparently offered her the same kind of financial assistance he had earlier given her brother. Her shop served middle-class women, offering items such as hosiery, gloves, and shawls. The store was successful enough that M'Clintock developed the reputation of a solid, responsible businesswoman, and she earned enough that she could retire in 1885 to a home in New Jersey. She died in 1896 at age 75, a woman whose life showed both the opportunities women created

for themselves in 19th century America and the limits they faced.

1. How did the newspapers affect people's views of women's rights after the Seneca Falls convention?

2. What experiences did Elizabeth M'Clintock have that might have made her interested in running her own business? (You may want to look again at Reading 1.)

3. What reasons did the men in Davis's firm give for denying M'Clintock's application?

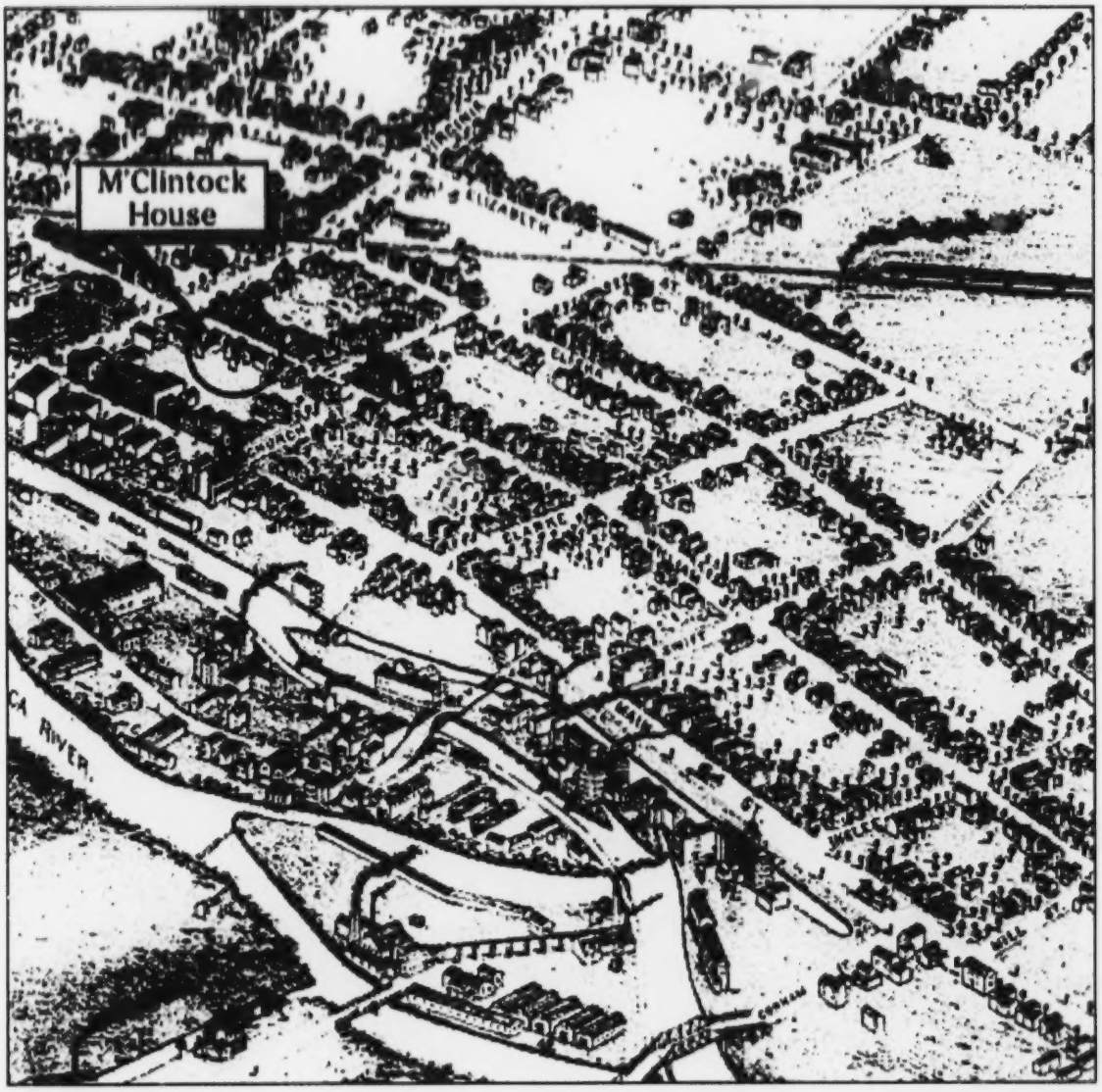
4. Given that Davis's firm took a strong stand against slavery, was it reasonable for his employees to worry about how having a female employee would hurt business? Why or why not?

Reading 4 was compiled from Andrea Constantine Hawkes, "'Feeling a Strong Desire to Tread a Broader Road to Fortune:' The Antebellum Evolution of Elizabeth Wilson M'Clintock's Entrepreneurial Consciousness," (Master's thesis, University of Maine, 1995); Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Eighty Years & More: Reminiscences,1815-1897 (New York: T. Fisher Unwin, 1898; reprint, Schocken Books, 1971).

1 Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Eighty Years More: & Reminiscences, 1815-1897 (New York: T. Fisher Unwin, 1898; reprint, Schocken Books, 1971), 149.
2 "Abstract of the discussion among the employees of E.M. Davis & Co. upon the expediency and right of admitting women into the store," 2 October 1849, Garrison Family Papers, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College.

Teaching Activities--Visual Evidence

Drawing 1: Bird's-Eye View of Waterloo, 1873.



(Terwilliger Museum, Waterloo, NY.)

1. Find the M'Clintock House. Given the description of its location in Reading 1, which building do you think would have housed the family's drug store?

2. What methods of transportation could the family utilize? How would the transportation they had access to affect both their business and reform activities?

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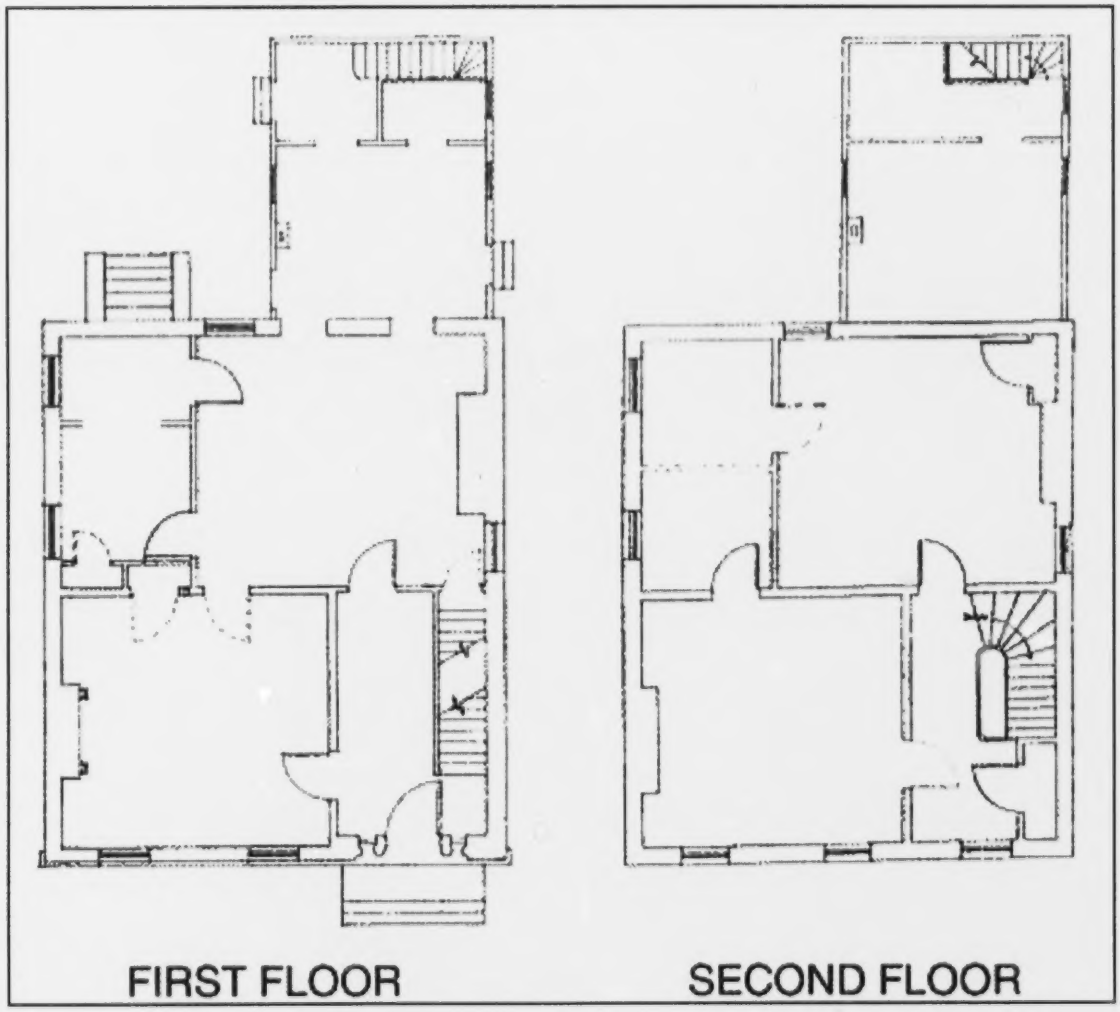
Teaching Activities--Visual Evidence

Drawing 2: Floor Plan of M'Clintock House.



(National Park Service)

Chart 1: Residents of the M'Clintock Household in 1850

Name	Age	Sex	Occupation
Thos. A. M'Clintock	58	M	Clerk
Mary A. "	50	F	
Eliza. "	29	F	Clerk
Mary A. "	27	F	
Sarah "	25	F	
Julia "	18	F	
W. B. Branch	16	M	Clerk
Mary Jackson (black)	17	F	
S. L. Freeman (mulatto)	8	F	

1. Considering the floor plan of the house, where do you think each person slept? (Don't forget the other rooms a family needs.) Where would overnight guests stay? How similar would life in the M'Clintock House be to life in a typical family home in the U.S. today?

2. What piece of information does the census include about Elizabeth but no other woman? How does that fit what else you know about her?

3. How does the presence of Mary Jackson and S.L. Freeman in the house illustrate the beliefs and activities of the M'Clintocks?

Teaching Activities--Visual Evidence

Photo 1: The M'Clintock House Today.

(Women's Rights National Historical Park)

Other people lived in the house at 14 E. Williams Street between 1856 and 1875. For most of the next 100 years it served as the parsonage for the Baptist Church that was built next door, though other people lived there at various times as well. In 1985, the National Park Service purchased the house in order to make it part of the Women's Rights National Historical Park, which includes property in both Waterloo and Seneca Falls.

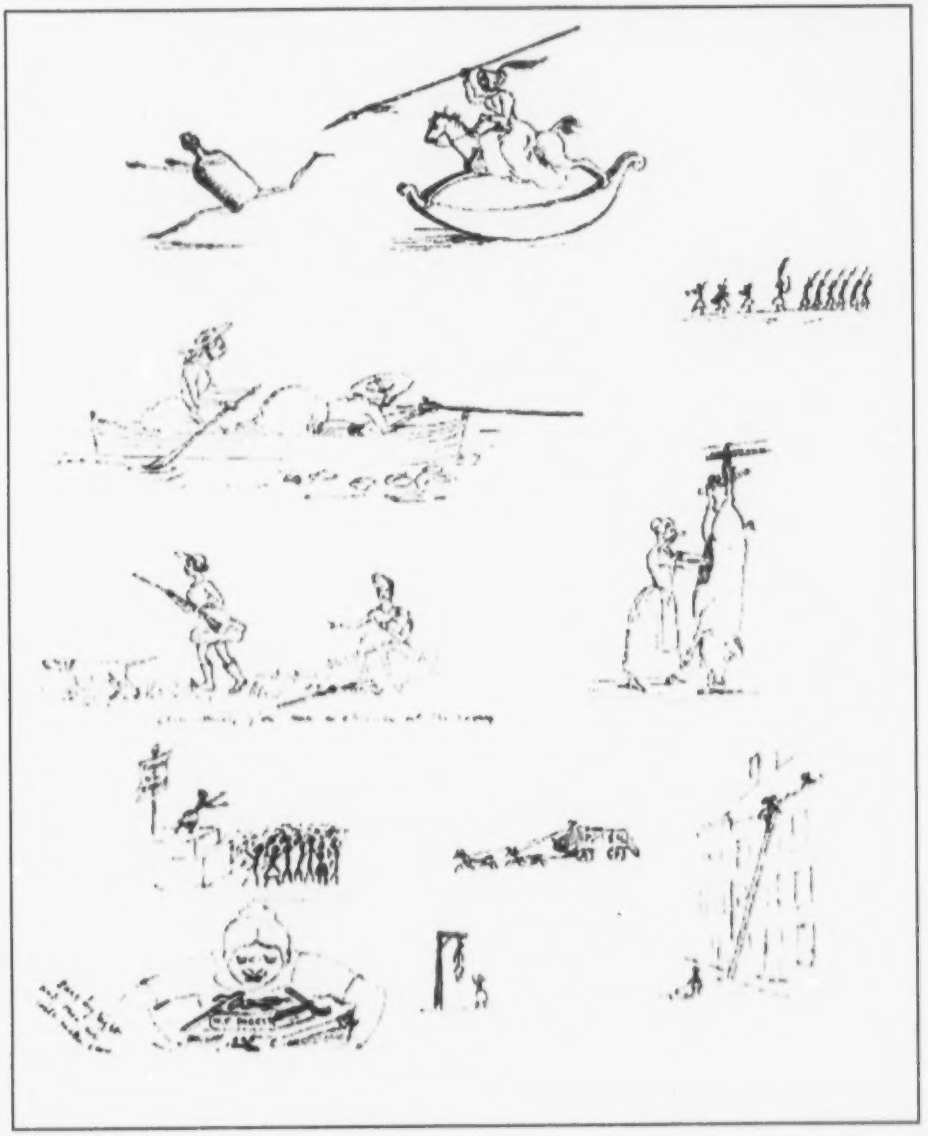
1. Do you think the appearance of the M'Clintock House indicates that it is ahistorically important place? Why or why not?

2. Do you think the M'Clintock House should be preserved? Why or why not?

3. Why do you think it took so long to recognize the historical importance of the M'Clintock House?

Teaching Activities--Visual Evidence

Cartoon 1: Views of Women's Roles from a Woman's Perspective.



(Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College)

Elizabeth M'Clintock drew these cartoons as part of her response to the rejection of her application to work at Edward Davis's silk business. The writing below the bottom cartoon on the left says, "Stop miss, give me a chance at the covey." The "N.Y. Digest" was a reference book that collected important court cases.

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1. What jobs or skills do these cartoons show women performing? Why do you think Elizabeth chose to draw these scenes? What point do you think she wanted to make?

2. How would you describe the clothing the women are wearing? Why do you think Elizabeth did not have them dress more like men?

3. Do you think these images would have changed the minds of people in the middle of the 19th century? Why or why not?

Putting It All Together

The following activities will help students better understand the impact the activities that took place in the M'Clintock House had in the development of women's rights. Students also will have the opportunity to learn about the contributions of important women in their community's history.

Activity 1: Social Reform

The M'Clintocks were involved in a number of reform movements. Have students use their textbooks or other resources to list some of the social problems that Americans faced in the 19th century. Ask students to choose the one they are most interested in and research how reformers tried to improve conditions. Have them prepare a report that addresses who led the reform, their background, solutions proposed, methods used to promote change, degree of success, and what affected their efforts.

Activity 2: Women's Rights in Your Area

The people who met in Seneca Falls were not the only ones trying to increase the rights of women. In many other places across the U.S., both before and since 1848, women and men worked to give women equal standing in politics, business, law, and other aspects of society. Have students use old newspapers, information from the local historical society, and other sources to research an important event in their community that reflected the battle over women's rights. As they investigate, have them keep the following questions in mind: What was the issue? Who were the main participants? What were the primary arguments on both sides? Who ultimately triumphed? Why? Have students present their findings in a paper, an oral report, or another format that effectively tells their audience what happened and why.